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Senate

The Senate met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable BRIAN SCHATZ, a Senator from the State of Hawaii.

PRAYER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Today's opening prayer will be offered by Rev. Kris Holzmeyer, campus pastor of Northwoods Baptist Church in Newburgh, IN.

The guest Chaplain offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Omnipotent Heavenly Father, we come to You this day in a spirit of worship. You are sovereign in all things and active in the affairs of men.

We are grateful for the blessings of freedom and prosperity You have bestowed upon our country and its citizens. We acknowledge that You and You alone are the provider of those blessings.

Lord, we ask for Your forgiveness for the many sins that plague our Nation. We ask for Your divine intervention as we move forward seeking to bring You glory and honor as a people. Today, men and women will gather in this room to make decisions on behalf of the American people. All of them have left family, friends, and occupations to serve a greater cause. Will You bless them, Lord? Will You shower them with Your favor? Help them to be unified, seeking Your will first and making Your motives their own. May the decisions they reach today serve our people well but, most importantly, may they be pleasing unto You.

In the name of Jesus Christ our Lord we pray. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Presiding Officer led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mr. LEAHY).

The legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, July 11, 2013.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable BRIAN SCHATZ, a Senator from the State of Hawaii, to perform the duties of the Chair.

PATRICK J. LEAHY,
President pro tempore.

Mr. SCHATZ thereupon assumed the chair as Acting President pro tempore.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

KEEP STUDENT LOANS AFFORDABLE ACT OF 2013—MOTION TO PROCEED

Mr. REID. I move to proceed to Calendar No. 124, S. 1238, Senator REED's student loan bill.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 1238) to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to extend the current reduced interest rate for undergraduate Federal Direct Stafford Loans for 1 year, to modify required distribution rules for pension plans, and for other purposes.

SCHEDULE

Mr. REID. Following my remarks and those of the Republican leader, the time until 12:30 today will be equally divided and controlled, with the Republicans controlling the first 30 minutes and the majority controlling the next 30 minutes.

The Senate will recess from 12:30 to 2:15 for caucus meetings.

SENATE RULES

Last month, the Republican leader spent a great deal of time talking about the importance of keeping one's word.

I agree without any question that Senators and everyone else should keep their word. I also believe a deal is a deal, a contract is a contract, an arrangement is an arrangement, a bargain is a bargain. As long as each party to such agreement holds up his end of the bargain, Senators should stick to their word.

But agreement is a two-way street. If one party fails to uphold their end, the agreement, of course, is null and void. The Republican leader wants everyone to believe—he has made many statements on the floor to which I have not responded—that I have broken my word. He neglects to recall his own commitments and his own words. Remember, an agreement is a two-way street.

Let's take a closer look at what the Republican leader committed to do. Let's look at the agreement we entered into together on the floor of this body, the Senate.

In a colloquy at the beginning of this Congress, January 24 of this year, I committed not to amend the Standing Rules of the Senate except through regular order. During that colloquy, Senator MCCONNELL also made a commitment. Senator MCCONNELL committed to end the constant Republican obstruction and return the Senate to a time when nominations were processed more efficiently.

This is what he said:

On the subject of nominations, Senate Republicans will continue to work with the majority to process nominations, consistent with the norms and traditions of the Senate.

I replied on the Senate floor:

The two leaders will continue to work together to schedule votes on nominees in a timely manner by unanimous consent, except in extraordinary circumstances.

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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